

Case Study

Workplace Mental Safety Trends Across Australian Workplaces

What the Data Tells Us



From sleep and stress to culture and workload: this report maps out the mental safety story unfolding across Australian workplaces, and looks at why understanding both people and systems is the key to prevention, compliance, and care.

Executive Summary

This case study presents an in-depth analysis of over 30,000 survey responses collected through Readiness, spanning 37 organisations across the 13 ANZSIC industry sectors. The data was reviewed through the lens of the Readiness Wellbeing Framework, which evaluates wellbeing across two key dimensions:

- **Workplace factors**, which captures the impact of organisational conditions and psychosocial hazards
- **Individual factors**, which reflects personal capacity including coping, energy, mindset, and resilience.

Together, these offer a dual view of how people are feeling and what their environments are contributing.

The sector-based approach allows for powerful benchmarking, highlighting how experiences vary not just between individuals, but also between industries. This enables employers and regulators to better understand where psychosocial risks are concentrated and where sector norms are shaping workplace mental health.

Individual Factors reflect personal wellbeing and include themes such as Sleep, Mood, and Coping. Across the board, these factors trended positively, with average scores often exceeding 75, indicating broad resilience. However, critical lows in Sleep and Coping, particularly in sectors like Information Media and Telecommunications, show that many individuals are maintaining positivity under strain.

Workplace Factors, which include hazards such as Workload, Change Management, and Reward and Recognition, were more volatile and more likely to drop below safe thresholds. These are not just wellbeing concerns, they're legal obligations under emerging psychosocial hazard regulations.

Together, the data reinforces a clear message: employers need visibility across both personal and environmental risk areas. Readiness provides that insight, and does so in sector-specific, data-driven, and proactive manner.

**Are You Managing
Psychosocial Risk,
or Just Hoping for
the Best?**



1. Overall Mental Safety Metrics

The data reveals a consistent pattern across the assessment period: employees rate their workplace conditions more favourably than their personal wellbeing. On every survey date, workplace factors scored higher than individual factors, sometimes by a margin of 5 to 10 points.

This pattern suggests that while most organisations in the sample are providing relatively strong psychosocial environments, employees may still be experiencing underlying strain, fatigue or under-recovery on a personal level.

The gap between organisational supports and individual capacity raises important strategic considerations. It may indicate:

- A mismatch between workplace expectations and employee energy,
- That individual resilience and wellbeing is being stretched to meet existing demands, or
- That positive conditions alone are not sufficient to sustain wellbeing without more targeted support for personal energy, mindset, and recovery.

This distinction will be further explored in the next sections by breaking down:

- Workplace wellbeing into its 14 psychosocial hazards (Section 2), and
- Individual wellbeing into the 9 personal factors (Section 4).

This insight also signals a need for integrated approaches that enhance both workplace and individual wellbeing, rather than treating one as a proxy for the other.

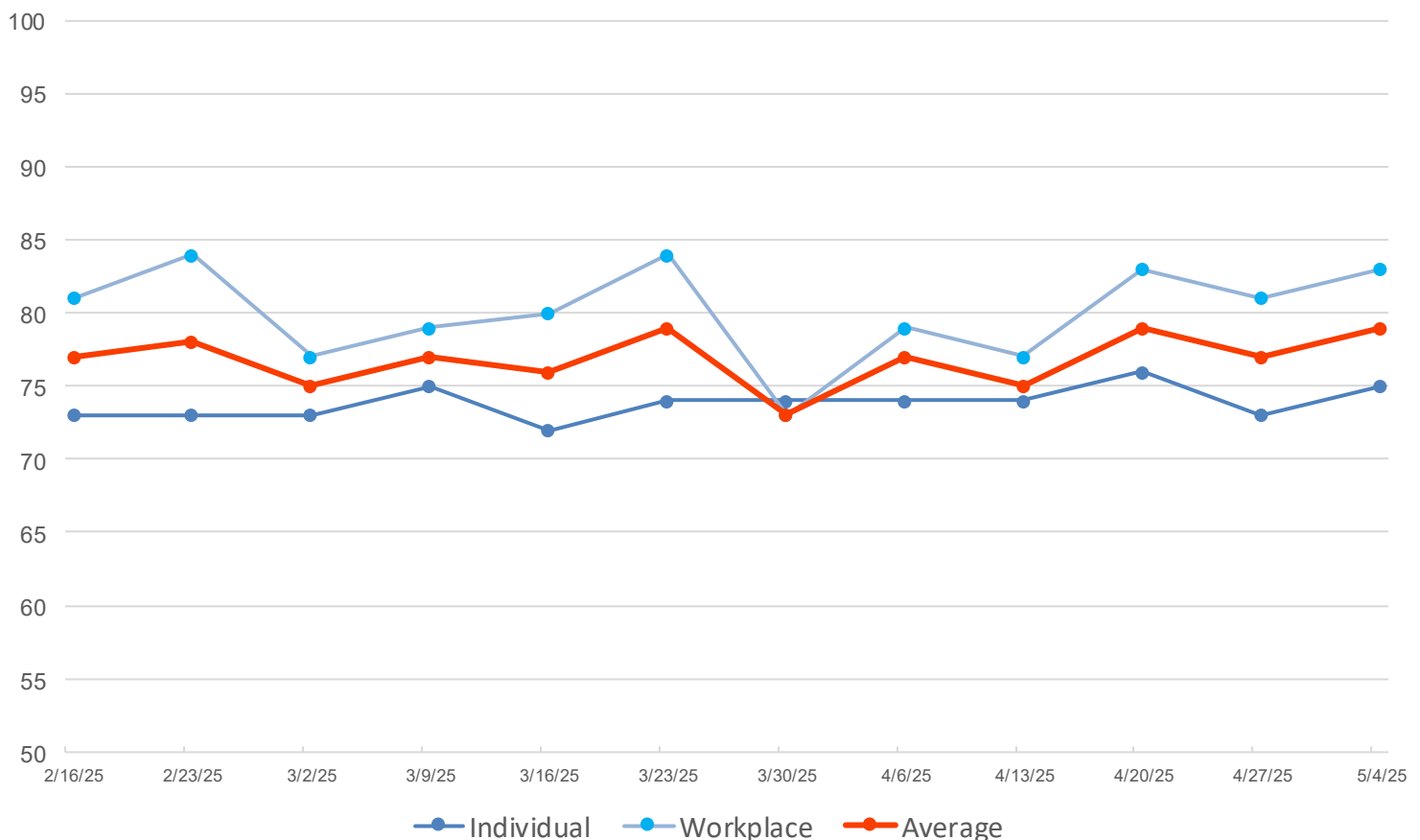


Figure 1 – Mental Safety measure across both Individual and Workplace factors, including an overall average.

2. Workplace Factors

A deep dive into the data across all workplace factors reveals clear patterns of psychosocial risk and resilience. Among the 14 Workwell aligned hazards, four emerge as areas of consistent concern:

- Work Life Balance scores lowest (69.1), indicating employees struggle to manage professional and personal demands.
- Change Management (70.0) and Work Flexibility (71.9) trail close behind, highlighting a need for more adaptive, employee support practices.
- Workload (72.4) suggests sustained pressure and may contribute to the imbalance observed above.

By contrast, interpersonal safety hazards such as Bullying and Violence and Aggression consistently scored in the 85–95 range, reflecting strong foundations in respectful workplace culture. This is good news, as these are the topics most likely to lead to serious issues that impact both the worker and the workplace. It is important not to become complacent however, as these areas can change drastically and rapidly.

The findings reinforce the role of proactive intervention in areas where employees feel undervalued, overburdened, or excluded from decision-making. While overall scores are not in the danger zone, these soft signals often point to early signs of burnout or disengagement and align with legal duties under psychosocial hazard regulations.

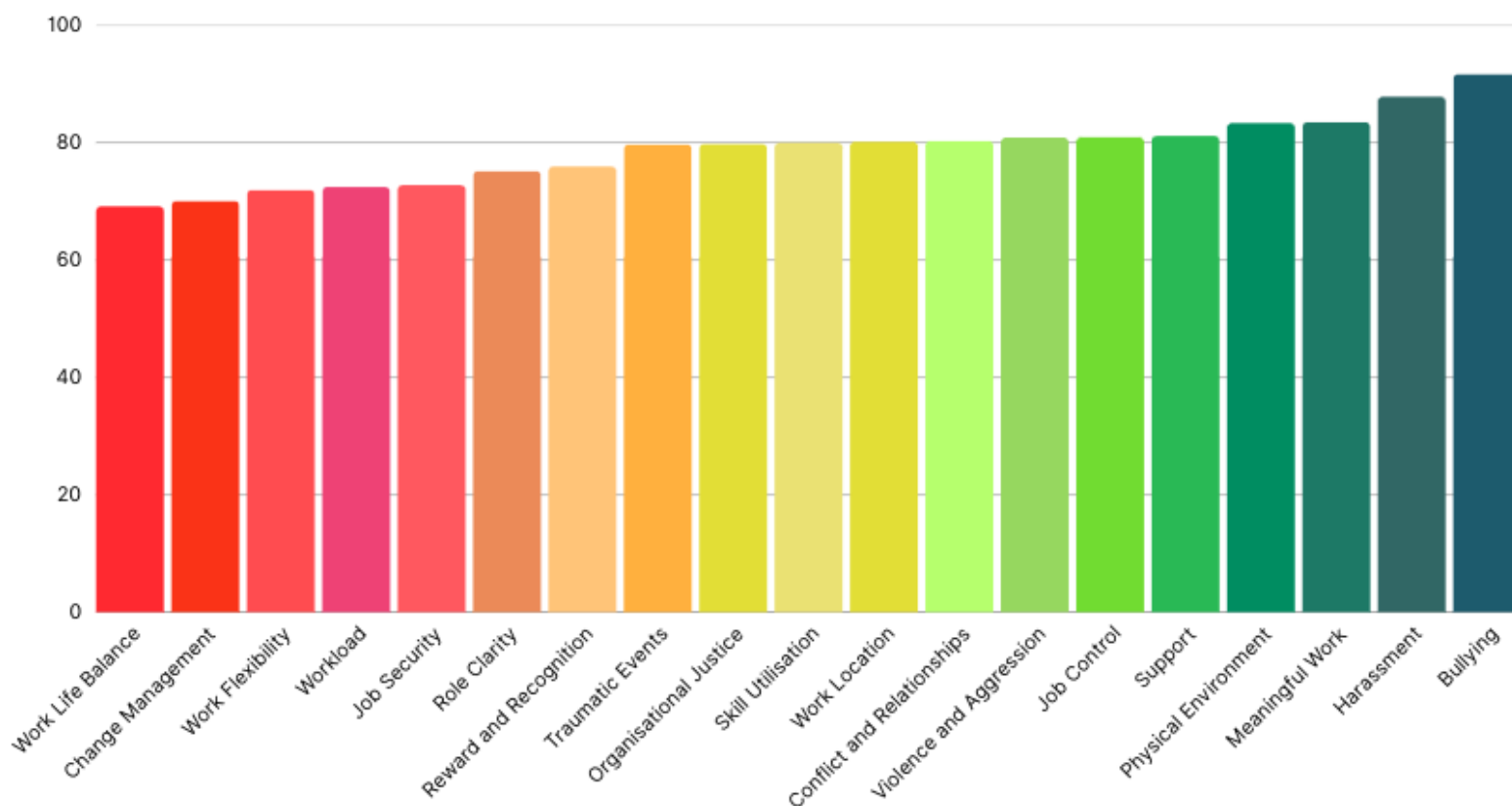


Figure 2 – A breakdown of the scores across each of the workplace factors.

3. Workplace Factors – Sector View

Workplace wellbeing varies notably by sector, with almost 15% difference between the lowest and highest scoring sectors, with Information Media and Telecommunications showing concerning results.

This sector records eight subtopics below the 70-point threshold, highlighting widespread psychosocial strain. The lowest scoring areas include:

- Work Life Balance: 45
- Work Flexibility: 60
- Change Management: 60

Meaningful Work, Reward and Recognition, Workload, Skill Utilisation, Work Location: All scoring ~60–67

These scores suggest structural stress across both role clarity and organisational support, likely reflecting pressures from industry disruption, downsizing, and evolving digital work environments.

Financial Services and Real Estate also show below-average performance, and whilst the overall score was mid range, Administrative and Support Services scored really poorly at 40 on Meaningful Work, which indicates a lack of purpose and role alignment.

In contrast, Education, Health, and Hospitality sectors report stronger psychosocial conditions.

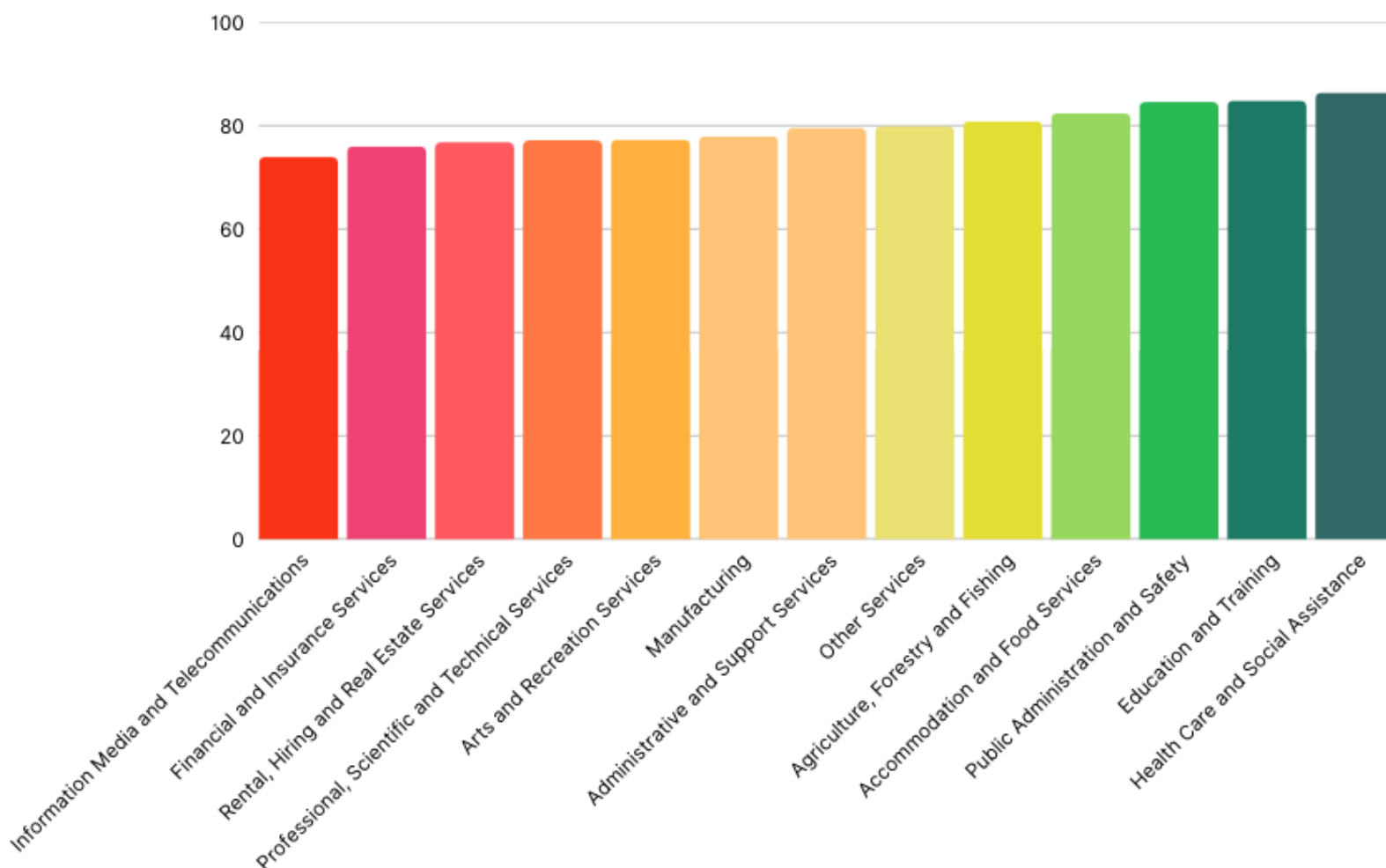


Figure 3 – The average scores for workplace factors by sector.

4. Individual Factors

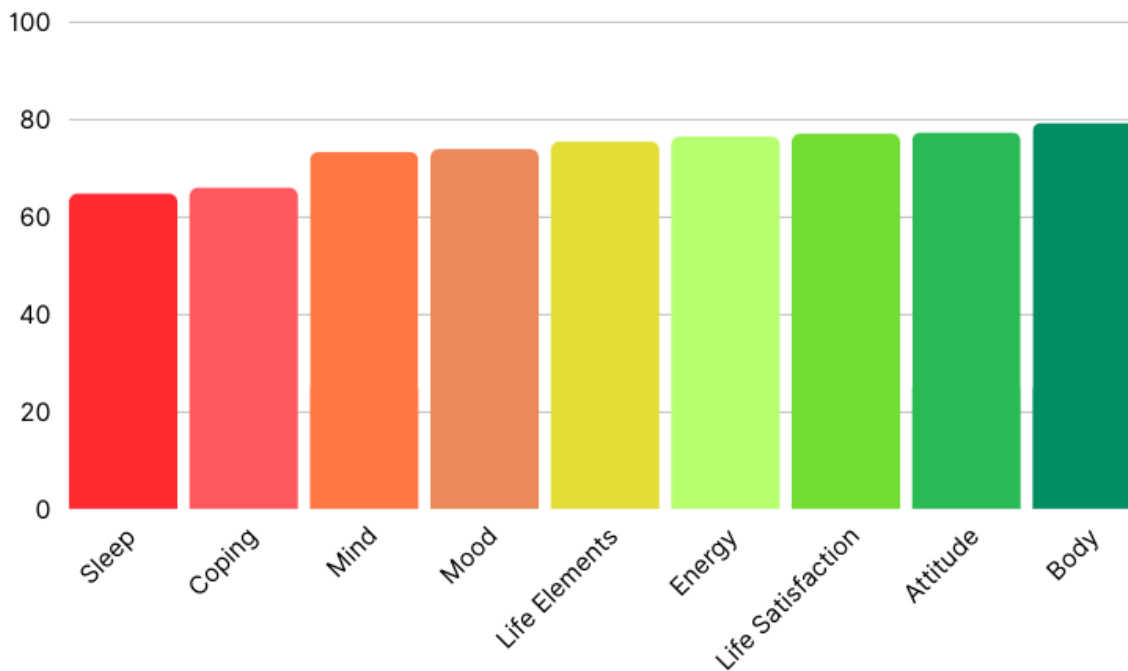


Figure 4 – A breakdown of the scores across each of the individual factors.

The Readiness survey's individual factors including Sleep, Mood, Coping, Energy, Mind, and Life Satisfaction offer a critical window into how employees are personally coping, beyond the systems that shape their work.

The data reveals a clear pattern: many employees are functioning through fatigue. The lowest scoring individual factor is Sleep, with an average score of just 64.8, followed by Coping at 66.0. These results suggest insufficient rest and limited psychological recovery, raising concerns about long term resilience.

Other wellbeing signals, including Mood (73.9), Mind (73.4), and Energy (76.5), paint a mixed picture. While these scores sit closer to moderate wellbeing levels, they remain below the ideal benchmark of 80+. The fact that these core emotional and cognitive factors are clustered in the low to mid 70s underscores a widespread theme of "low fuel" in the workforce.

Encouragingly, some personal strength is evident. Body (79.3), Attitude (77.4), and Life Satisfaction (77.1) are performing relatively well. These scores suggest that despite strain, many employees maintain a sense of personal stability and purpose.

Critically, these individual factors correlate with broader workplace conditions. Where workload, flexibility, or support are low, personal indicators like Mood, Sleep, and Coping tend to decline. This confirms that personal wellbeing is not just an individual issue, but a reflection of environmental stressors.

To sustain performance and wellbeing, organisations must support both workplace and individual factors. Investing in rest, recovery, and personal capacity is not just beneficial, it is essential.

5. Individual Factors – Sector View

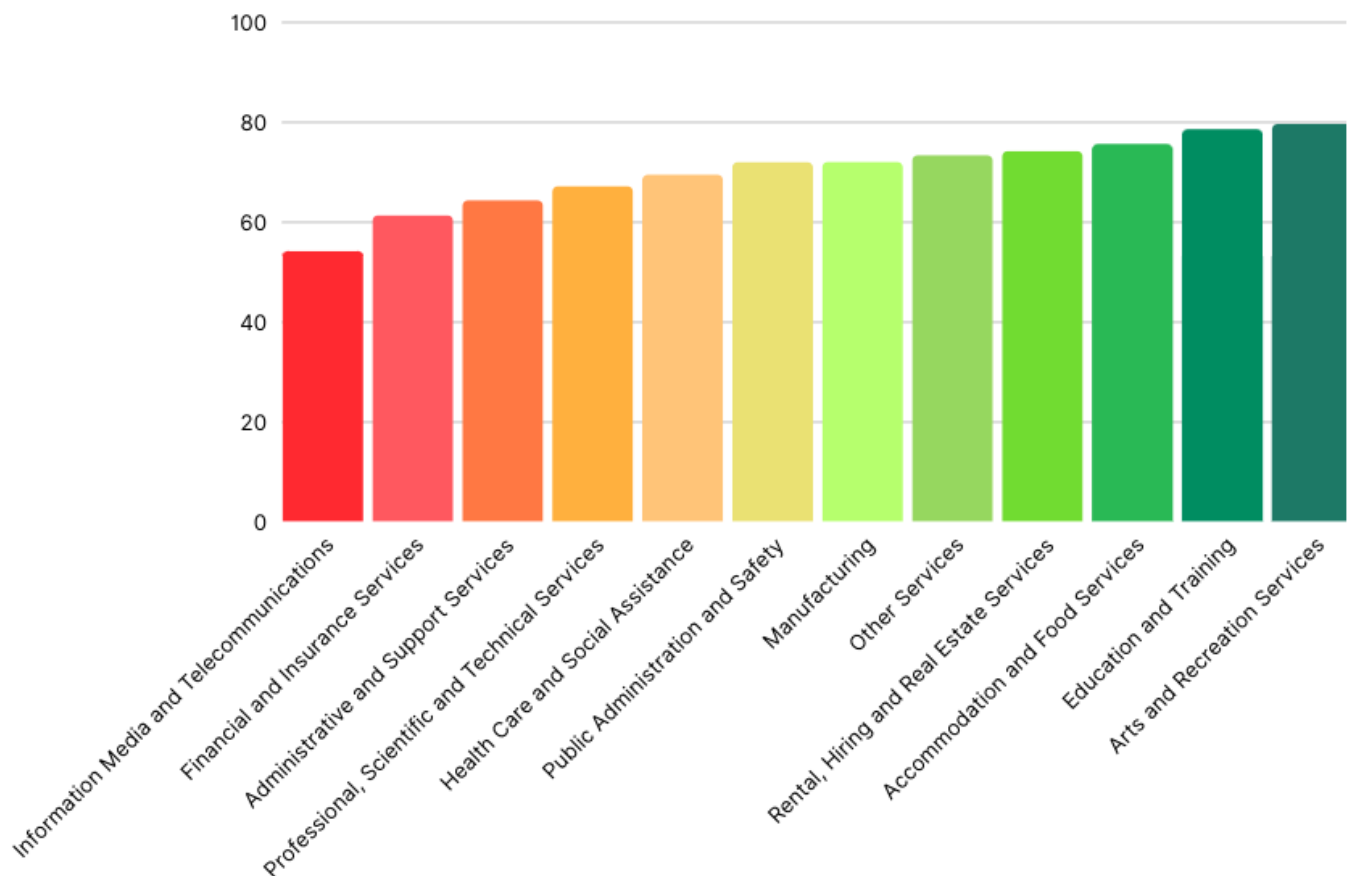


Figure 5 – The average scores for individual factors by sector.

Sector analysis reveals major differences in personal wellbeing. Industries like Education and Training (78.7), Arts and Recreation (79.7), and Accommodation and Food Services (75.7) report strong individual factor scores, suggesting supportive conditions and meaningful work.

In contrast, Information Media and Telecommunications and Administrative and Support Services show significantly lower scores, indicating widespread personal strain. These trends reinforce the value of tailoring wellbeing strategies by industry context.

While some sectors foster personal resilience, others may require urgent attention to address underlying stressors, particularly around sleep, stress management, and overall life satisfaction.

Information Media and Telecommunications stands out as the most at-risk sector for personal wellbeing. It records the lowest average individual factor score overall, with critical lows in Sleep (34.5), Life Satisfaction (42.2), and Coping (45.4).

This paints a picture of a workforce struggling with exhaustion, low morale, and limited stress regulation. Nearly every personal wellbeing domain in this sector falls well below acceptable thresholds.

The data suggests not only a mental health concern but also a potential risk to productivity and retention. Targeted support, such as workload adjustment, recovery time, and clarity around role purpose—is urgently needed in this industry.

Conclusion

This analysis of over 30,000 survey records provides a comprehensive snapshot of both individual wellbeing and workplace conditions across a wide range of Australian sectors.

The results show a meaningful distinction: while individual wellbeing factors are generally stable and positive, workplace factors are more variable and vulnerable, pointing to significant psychosocial risks that require structured attention.

Individual factors such as Mood, Mind, and Life Elements score well across most industries, reflecting a level of personal resilience among workers. However, areas like Sleep and Coping trend lower, reminding us that even strong individuals can be worn down by long-term pressure.

Workplace factors, by contrast, reveal greater inconsistency and risk. Subtopics such as Workload, Work-Life Balance, Change Management, and Reward and Recognition frequently appear below the 70-point threshold, especially in sectors facing disruption or resourcing challenges. These hazards align directly with WorkSafe Victoria's psychosocial risk categories, making them not just a wellbeing concern, but a regulatory one.

The data shows that workplace conditions are more likely to fluctuate over time, and that unmanaged hazards can gradually undermine even resilient individuals. That's why Readiness is essential, not just for identifying issues, but for tracking, responding, and preventing them before they escalate. Regular use of Readiness enables employers to act early, align with regulation, and build mentally safe workplaces that genuinely support wellbeing.

For organisations committed to both care and compliance, the message is clear: keep using Readiness. It's not just a survey, it is your early warning system, your psychosocial compass, and your partner in creating sustainable, thriving workplaces.

